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ABSTRACT

By discussing the commonalities of community and multicultural education; this monograph intends to provide a rational base for and encourage efforts toward coordination, cooperation, and integration of these two concepts. Part 1 addresses the conceptual structure of community education and multicultural education. Questions are listed that focus on melding the goals of the two concepts-- serving the community and representing all segments of the population. Next, the historical background of these two concepts is described. The section ends with a discussion of community involvement in implementation of both concepts. Part 2 contains material that focuses on the teacher in the classroom. Teacher preparation in both community education and multicultural education is considered as crucial to implementing the concepts. Requirements for an effective teacher in multicultural education are listed, and solutions for teacher inservice preparation are suggested. Questions for exploration of teachers' attitudes are also provided. The area of teacher and parent relations, an essential component for both community and multicultural education preparation, is then considered. Finally, standards and recommendations for teacher preparation are discussed. (YLB)

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# MULTICULTURAL/COMMUNITY EDUCATION: AN EXPLORATION OF A RELATIONSHIP FOR EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

by
Donna Hager Schoeny
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## Preface

Each of the two concepts, Community Education and Multicultural Education, has emerged and developed in contemporary society as a result of the needs of community. The former, Community Education, came on the scene more than fifty years ago and primarily received private foundation support until recently. It involved a relatively small number of people who were not viewed as being in critical or dire need. The concept of "community" was taken to mean a dynamic interaction of the people in a given area—school attendance area or school district—in an educational setting.

Multicultural Education has emerged rapidly in the last twenty-five years. It has received financial support from both the state and federal governments in various forms. Some municipalities have provided local funds, as well, for the implementation of educational programs that are multicutural. This support has occured as a result of an overwhelming consciousness of the needs of approximately twenty-five percent of the American population which identifies with an other-than-white Anglo-Saxon heritage.

Although the concepts emerged from different beginnings and for different reasons, in the opinion of the authors they have much in common. It is our intention to cite that common ground, the purpose being to provide a rational base for the coordination, cooperation, and possibly blending of the concepts toward the common goal of educational improvement for *all members of a community*. Also to provide a challenge to educators to reduce the isolationism and to encourage coordinated efforts to assist in the integration of these two concepts with the educational process.

The conceptual structure of Community Education and Multicultural Education is contained in the early pages of the monograph (Part I). The discussion moves, then, from the abstract to the specific (Part II). The latter half of the monograph contains material that focuses on the teacher in the classroom—the cutting edge of any educational program. The action in public education is the point of contact of teacher with student, and therein resides the greatest productive influence on the community, **all** members of the community. Therefore, this treatise was developed as a challenge to educators to address this issue and in part to meet the needs of the classroom teacher. It includes suggestions for accomplishing the overarching goal common to both Community Education and Multicultural Education, that is the involvement of all segments of a community in the educational processes, and raises questions for further examination of these concepts.

Portions of this monograph have appeared in the *Community Education Journal,* in a monograph on *Issues in Community Education,* and in one of Phi Delta Kappa's Fastback Series.

D.H.S. and J.H.B.

# PART I CONSIDERATIONS CONCEPTUALLY

## INTRODUCTION

Many professional educators are unaware of the significance of the implications for community and educational development of ethnic diversity in American society. As a consequence, the implementation of many educational and community policies and practices falls short of reasonable expectations. In that regard, there are two recent trends in the field of education which appear to have similar goals. As yet, however, they do not appear to have been joined systematically to accomplish their similar aims. They are generally identified as Community Education and Multicultural Education. In order to ensure substantial movement toward the common goal of realistic and representative community involvement in educational decision-making, it is suggested herein that educational and community leaders will find it useful to adopt the strategies based on a basic conceptual framework inherent in and common to both Community Education and Multicultural Education ultimately to improve the essence of education—what goes on in the classroom.

Community Education, as a concept, espouses the aim of serving "all the people," using democratic processes. There is also an emphasis on identifying and meeting the needs of communities being served. With the increase of federal programs that require community support, participating school districts are being compelled to involve citizens who are representative of their communities.

Multicultual Education, similarly, seeks to ensure that community participation in the decision-making process involves representatives of all segments of a population. Representativeness and appreciation for individuality are essential components of this concept. Multicultural Education holds that representativeness in decision-making must be a consideration when attempting to involve the community in school affairs.

The two thrusts, Community Education and Multicultural Education, could have jointly more impact on professional education in general, the public school administration, and especially the classroom if their concepts were melded for the improvement of public education. Ultimately, the resulting cooperation, it is maintained, would strengthen the individual's ability to adapt and survive in a changing, dynamic society.

## QUESTIONS OF COMMON GOALS

A number of questions serve to focus thinking on possible methods of melding these concepts for the purpose of identifying and reaching their common goals:

- What is the common philosophical base of the two concepts: Multicultural Education and Community Education?
- What are the potential linkages and mutual concerns of Multicultural and Community Education?
- Assuming that community involvement is essential to both concepts, how may involvement best be implemented, and what does involvement mean?
- How are teachers to receive training in both areas so that the concepts may be implemented?

- What are the most effective resources for implementing Community and/or Multicultural Education to reach the teacher in the classroom?

The foregoing questions by no means cover all issues related to both concepts but merely serve as a beginning in the process of examining the relationships between Community Education and Multicultural Education. They are intended to stimulate the reader to think in terms of what can be done to implement the programs and principles in the educational process— not only to think, but to act and to begin to integrate and utilize these processes at the local level.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DEFINITIONS

Both Community Education and Multicultural Education have been recognized comparatively recently as focal points of concern within the total field of education. Community Education is a developing concept initially supported financially by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation beginning in the 1930's. Interest and support for this concept has expanded, and in the 1970's it became federally-funded. Concern for Multicultural Education, evidenced in the aftermath of the civil rights movement of the 1960's, has been growing rapidly and now also is reflected in federal legislative support. The most recent, significant support may be the Ethnic Heritage Studies Act of 1972, now Title IX of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

As a result of the recent federal emphasis and the increase in activity at the local level of both Community Education and Multicultural Education, researchers on the subjects have put forth many definitions. Several of them, in which relationships or linkages are suggested, serve as references to answer the first question regarding the common base of Community Education and Multicultural Education.

Community Education has been defined by many writers. The word "process" is a recurring notion in all these definitions. Seay (1974) defined Community Education as ". . . . the process that achieves a balance and a use of all institutional forces in the education of the people — all of the people — of the community." It is useful to point out that the phrase "all of the people" has implications for Multicultural Education. Are community educators who anchor their programs and processes in this definition concerned with reaching *all* people? Do programs, meetings, and events reflect the socio-economic and ethnic representation of the community? Non-representation has been identified as a barrier to active involvement of individuals representing the broadest spectrum of a community. Administrators often are presented with, and some frequently rely on, input from narrowly based, partisan groups that have biased opinions geared toward a particular need which does not reflect the total community (Fusco, 1968). The needs and views of low income or minority citizens (and sometimes both) often are not presented in such forums. This void in representation is evidenced frequently when an administrator selects and appoints a supposedly, representative council. Few administrators have been known to appoint activists to a council, or *not* to set limits on discussions. (Ryan, 1976). This in turn, influences the classroom teacher who must operate under the influence of an administrator with limited knowledge of community needs.

Minzey and LeTarte (1979) explored and analyzed several definitions of "community" and Community Education. They synthesized ingredients from several sources to arrive at the following definition:

> Community Education is a philosophical concept which serves the entire community by providing for all of the educational needs of its community members. It uses the local school to serve as the catalyst for bringing community resources to bear on community problems in an effort to develop a positive sense of community, improve community living, and develop the community process toward the end of self-actualization.

Again, reference to *all* (implied by the word "entire") community members and *process* are included. In addition, it should be noted that in this definition there is advocacy of school-based processes. Often, Community Education efforts are not limited to the school; however, when relating Communtiy Education to Multicultural Education, the school appears to be the most logical locus to coordinate the two concepts. The school, as Minzey suggests, has the potential to implement Community and Multicultural Education, as well as to plan and manage change in education in other areas, thereby assigning an active role for the school in related social issues. The primary contact for the school with the community is the classroom teacher. If, in fact, Community Education does not permeate its programs and processes with the principles of Multicultural Education, we suggest that Community Education violates its own basic tenets.

Heimstra (1972) noted that successful Community Education programs reflect the unique nature of the community served. If education truly serves the uniqueness of diverse communities, then ethnic and socio-economic considerations would be reflected in educational practice in the schools, particularly in the classroom. A simple example could be seen in the type of programs offered in adult education. If, in a predominately Spanish-speaking neighborhood, high school completion was an identified need of the adult population that the school sought to address, and all classes were taught in English only, certainly the instructional method would not reflect the need of the community, nor would it reflect cultural or linguistic considerations (See further studies by Jane Mercer). Bilingual instruction perhaps should be encouraged. In addition, if the regular classroom does not include bilingual education, community needs are not being considered. A sewing course offered in an area where no one has sewing machines would not reflect socio-economic considerations of the particular community. At the classroom level, expensive school T-shirts, field trips, and cheerleaders' uniforms preclude inclusion of lower socio-economic groups in the community. Although these examples may be considered exaggerated, they are representative of practices not altogether unusual. The further question could be raised: "Has the expanded role of community schools met any real community needs?"

Decker (1972) did not precisely define Community Education but alluded to its use in order to make education relevant and accountable, contending also that it is adaptable and flexible:

> Intrinsic in the community education philosophy is the belief that each program should reflect its specific community, and the dynamic and self-renewal processes in the philosophy demand that changes and modifications occur as times and problems change. Thus, there is diversity in community education programs.

The diversity Decker refers to is a part of the strength of the concept. If diversity in the concept is stressed, then the inherent potential for addressing diversity in schools, communities, or neighborhoods remains open and possible. Communities are not static, and any educational philosophy that includes "community" must remain dynamic and ready to serve the needs of *the community*, whether it is neighborhood, municipal, county, state, nation, hemisphere, or world. No child or adult in this age of instant communication—visual and oral—can escape the need for preparation to cope with the mysteries and challenges of cultural, economic, ethnic, or national diversities.

In summary, Community Education, as an emergent concept, has several program and process components. Professionals in the field focus on specific components for implementation. The selection of the components depends on the nature of the target community. For the purpose of this discussion, process elements are emphasized.

Process implies a dynamic approach that has implications permeating the *entire* structure of education as well as the social, cultural, and economic structures of a community. If provided with a process designed to bring representative elements together to work within the community, educational leaders are enabled to plan change and be active in the change process, rather than to continue to be "reactive." In other words, desirable change to accomplish pre-determined objectives, can be planned, managed, evaluated, and modified.

In reviewing the definitions of Community Education, one sees the two ideas taken from them which are most relevant to Multicultural Education are "process" and reference to "all" members of communities. At first examination, Community Education appears to have the potential of being a "near panacea" for all educational concerns; however, in its continued development, many factors remain as obstructions before it legitimately can be offered in this light. One barrier is the lack of available evidence that Community Education truly meets community needs, evidence that can be examined in light of ethnic and socio-economic concerns. Definitions of Multicultural Education and their relationship to Community Education lead to overlapping needs and approaches that can be examined as common concerns. A widely used definition of Multicultural Education is contained in the statement of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education entitled "No One Model American" (Journal of Teacher Education, 1978).

> Multicultural education is education which values cultural pluralism. Multicultural education rejects the view that schools should seek to melt away cultural differences or that schools should merely tolerate cultural pluralism. . . . Cultural diversity is a valuable resource that should be preserved and extended.

This position is directed toward teachers for consideration of the effect of their attitudes on students.

The "melting pot" view of America was rejected in this statement and replaced with an acceptance of diverse cultural groups and communities. If this is the current focus for education, community educators have the responsibility to acknowledge and to reflect diversity in attempts to influence the educative process.

A more explicit definition, recognizing what Multicultural Education *is not*, is stated by White (1973):

> The demand for multi-cultural education should not be construed as a demand for 'separate but equal' education but for cultural diversity. Multi-Culturalism in education rejects segregation of any kind and is a means of *teaching* all children to know and respect all Americans rather than only some....

To accomplish the goal of teaching children to respect "all Americans," education of the community for understanding, involvement, and support is implicit. Education in this sense means teaching, and in the process, learning from community members concepts that are supportive of those learned by the children in the classroom. If students are taught positive multicultural values in school that are negated or not supported at home, effective interaction may become difficult or a conflict situation for students may result. The emphasis is on "all"—not on minority or on any other special population. We have discussed this similar emphasis in Community Education definitions. Grant (1977) has presented a pertinent issue in the definition of Multicultural Education. He recommended:

> That the term given to the educational process in a culturally and socially pluralistic society not be called 'multicultural education' because this term implies a narrow, limiting, and supplementary concept and focus.

The connotation of Multicultural Education is that of an add-on "program," often confused with ethnic studies or a type of "band-aid" approach to deal with diversity. Grant's (1977) approch suggests a permeation of the entire educational process predicated upon the statement:

> Given an understanding of the nature of human differences and the realization that individuals approach concepts from their own perspective, advocates of 'education that is multi-cultural' are consistent in their belief that respect for diversity and individual differences is the central ingredient of the concept.

As the definition is expanded and explained, the principles reflect the necessity for community involvement and participation: "...Education programs that are multicultural must, by their very nature, *actively involve* individuals of different racial and cultural backgrounds. Participation by such individuals is essential..." (Grant 1978). Such participation is exemplified in one of Community Education's basic tenets, the criterion affecting K-12 education process through community participation.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) in a recent publication (Grant, ed., 1977) addressed the concerns of Multicultural Education. This interpretation of the concept is "...a humanistic concept based on the strength of diversity, human rights, social justice, and alternative life choices for all people." The essential goals included developing interaction of people and experiences of diverse cultural groups that are positive and productive. This suggests the need to go beyond the walls of a school building to implement effectively Multicultural Education. One of the ASCD's illustrative suggestions for application includes the following dictum: "Institute a system of shared governance in the schools, in which all groups can enter equally in the learning and practice of democratic procedures." *Governance* and *shared decision-making* are crucial concerns in education today but they are of particular interest to Community and Multicultural Education.

As previously stated, most definitions of Multicultural Education share the common element of affecting *all* people in society. To do this, it is essential to involve community in the process. It would be impossible to define adequately either Community Education or Multicultural Education by eliminating the words, "all" or "process," in either the actual work or the meanings inherent in the concepts. If education is the purveyor of cultural heritage, ideals, values, and knowledge and is affected by social conditions, "influenced by cultural values, the political system, the economic order, and social stratification," (Clark, 1963), then concepts represented in Multicultural and Community Education must be addressed. They represent the cutting edge of societal change. This often presents a dilemma of leadership:

> Public schools are frequently torn between two poles. As the purveyor of the nation's cultural heriage, they are inevitably conservative but as a potential instrument of social betterment, they are under constant pressure to improve the society around them. (Cobbs, 1977)

## A MUTUAL FOUNDATION: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The "purveyor role" takes place primarily at the classroom level, and the resulting influence is on the community. Many additional concerns surround the entire field of education; however, the next question addresses those which are related to *community involvement.*

Assuming that community involvement is an essential ingredient in the implementaion of both concepts, the question is raised: what does involvement mean? Is it decision-making? control? governance? volunteers in the classroom? participation? PTA or O? school board? An irrefutable answer is not attempted here; rather, the emphasis is placed on some degree of participation in decision-making and governance. Participation is often confused with control—a controversial, polarizing idea. Control by any single group does not always refect a meeting of the needs of a representative majority in a local setting. A shared decision-making process involving lay citizens in educational matters is advocated here as the most effective way for education in all areas to meet the needs of its constituency. Educators must share their responsibility in an open, non-threatening manner if they are to avoid community control incidents by

irate citizen groups as evidenced in the Ocean-Hill Brownsville Experiment. The creation of this district was an attempt to meet demanded participation. However, it was done with miscommunication with the public in the midst of an existing controversy (Fantini and Gittell, 1969). The results of this situation can be viewed as the lack of a planned, developed, on-going, and organized attempt at community involvement in educational decision-making.

Educational decision-making must be seen as a part of the political arena surrounding education that affects every facet of education, including the classroom. The governance structure in education is, in most states, a result of non-partisan politics, usually controlled by the super socio-economic strata of a community. Clark (1963) cited three reasons for this:

> 1) priviledged social strata need less inducement to bring them to the polls, thus candidates supported by active and organized middle-class fare proportionately better; 2) candidates depend on business organizations and private individuals for campaign contributions; and 3) with no party distiguishing characteristics, prevoter information is more important when entering the voting booth.

Since the means of communication are most often disproportionately controlled by the wealthier segments of the population, the poorer strata are politically disadvantaged. Consequently, community educators or multicultural educators are compelled to work within the informal, as well as the formal, political system to accomplish their goals. If community educators viewed their position as one of interacting in a micropolitical process toward school governance, then they would accept the charge that "community education can become the vehicle for development of a community political structure to maintain local influence in decision-making and to make policies more representative of the community's needs" (Tobias and Hager, 1977). Such a position provides the basis for Multicultural Education to become a reality. Traditionally, institutions have not responded favorably to alternative forms of education, economic reform, and social reform but have used political influence to protect themselves against change. Democratic principles on the other hand, insist on power diffusion, as Bachrach (1967) indicated:

> The crucial issue of democracy is not the composition of the elite...for the man on the bottom it makes little difference whether the command emanated from an elite of workers and farmers. Instead the issue is whether democracy can diffuse power sufficiently throughout all walks of life, a justifiable feeling that they have the power to participate in decisions which affect themselves and the common life of the communtiy, especially the immediate community in which they work and spend most of their working hours and energy.

In keeping with democratic principles and political reality, as they relate to Multicultural Education, one must accept the realization that not only ethnic minorities are being alienated, bureaucratized, or depersonalized by today's very politically active society but that:

> . . . all of us are being sized and fitted to sets of specifications that are essentially depersonalizing and destructive to human individuality. In a very real sense, members of the majority culture or dominant segment of society are just as invalidated as *individuals* as are members of minority groups and culture. (Grant, 1977)

The point regarding the meaning of involvement is that in recognizing multicultural processes, *each* person must be accorded respect, regardless of the social, ethnic, cultural, and religious background. This is a concern which must be addressed by everyone, and participatory decision-making in school governance is one vehicle to ensure involvement.

## PART II CONSIDERATIONS FOR TEACHERS

### TRAINING NEEDS

The most important question then arises related to training. How are teachers to receive training in Community Education and Multicultural Education so that both concepts can be implemented? This is an issue which educators must examine seriously if this is to become a reality.

Teachers are as subject to human foibles as other people. Without question, some teachers may regard their assignments to multiethnic schools as less than alluring. They may face their assignments with misgivings and anxiety because of their personal concern about the reactions of both the white and the non-white communities and because of their belief that they will have difficulty working with children whose goals, value system, and behavior are different from their own. This is due to their lack of training and preparation to consider the implications of diverse ethnic backgrounds of students and the communities in which they live.

Individuals' perceptions (accurate or distorted) of situations influence their behavior. Perception and behavior are both influenced by training (or lack of it) and attitudes toward people and objects in situations. Therefore, teachers in a multicultural setting must examine their own attitudes toward members of other ethnic groups so that they can develop satisfactory working relationships with them. This usually does not take place in teacher training programs. Concern for children by teachers of different ethnic identities hopefully will lead teachers to recognize each other, regardless of ethnic origin, as professionals, as persons worthy of respect and dignity, and as colleagues with similar goals.

Hence, an important factor to take into account in examining one's own attitudes is that the examination must take place in a diverse ethnic setting. Self-examination without input from one's colleagues likely will result in the conclusion, "I'm all right; it must be the other person whose attitude needs changing." Of course, this is the safest procedure and the least threatening conclusion; also, one's own ego does not get hurt, i.e., changing oneself is not necessary.

Teacher preparation (pre and in-service) is an area recently dealt with more extensively in Multicultural Education but limited in Community Education. Both areas are heavily dependent on teachers for effective implementation, but training in either area is not presently a requirement in most, if not all, state certification standards. Efforts are being made to change the present licensing procedures based on increasing evidence that these areas are crucial to teacher training.

> Communities vary sociologically, economically, and culturally. Teachers need to understand the type of community in which the students live if they are to help students in their understanding of their environment . . . the community should be involved in determining both what is taught and the method of teaching. The community should be viewed as a resource to the school. (Hager, 1977)

However, it would appear naive to suggest that teachers will demand or even accept training in either area unless the concepts have been accepted or sanctioned by some other superordinate group. This may be part of the challenge to community educators, that is, to apply their process skills in the larger political arenas of education to influence universities, state departments of education and accrediting associations so that they have an impact on teacher preparation. Most teachers are hesitant to become actively involved in efforts to involve community members in their classroom because they have had little or no training in the utilization and management of citizen involvement. The same is true for implementing Multicultural Education; teachers are crucial to the effort but lack the training to put the concepts to work.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER

The role of teachers has been addressed in several publications related to Muticultutal Education. One of the most practical approaches utilizing the community is demonstrated by Arciniega (1977) in the following list of requirements for an effective teacher in Multicultural Education:

1) A recognition of the legitimate role that parents have in the educative process.
2) A readiness to participate in a variety of the minority community activities.
3) A desire to involve minority parents and community residents in school-community programs.
4) A knowledge and understanding of the minority community and its dynamics.
5) A recognition that genuine community involvement in school related activities can be a positive asset rather than a liability.
6) A willingness to receive guidance and support from members of the minority community regarding the special needs of their children.
7) An organizational facility and skill in sponsoring community service projects and programs to benefit the target community.
8) (In short) A genuine sensitivity to the desires and needs of the target minority communities which his/her school serves.

Even if the word *minority* were omitted, the skills required still *would be necessary for every teacher.*

The authors suggest additional steps teachers could initiate so they could begin the process of understanding Multicultural Education in their situations through individual and group in-service preparation programs. To study alone is only to acquire factual data, an exercise in cognition. Teachers should consider seeking solutions through group efforts. It is suggested that teachers, as a minimum effort, might:

1) Encourage their principals to initiate a study of the problems of Multicultural Education in the school by devoting faculty meeting time to a discussion of this topic as well as others more specific to the locale.
2) Do independent reading on the subject in appropriate professional publications.
3) Deliberately seek to establish a professional relationship with teachers of ethnic groups other than their own to have mutually beneficial exchange of information, objectively and professionally dealing with information and misinformation.

Groups of teachers and their principals could consider seeking and devising additional procedures in examining the nature and meaning of the problems identified. For those who are somewhat reluctant to initiate study on their own, it might be well to consider the utilization of outside specialists as consultants to assist in planning study programs and in conducting appropriate in-service seminars in both Community and Multicultural Education.

A small planning group could be established (preferably *elected* by the group which it is to represent), which is representative of cultural and ethnic diversity. The purpose of such a committee would be to serve as a focus for identifying and examining the problems of intergroup relations within the school. On the basis of their assessments, they could plan the in-service time allocated to the study of Multicultural Education and/or Community Education. Regular weekly seminars, weekend seminars, or full-blown institutes of one to six weeks or more might be the result of the planning efforts. Many school systems across the country have found the institute approach very helpful.

## QUESTIONS FOR ATTITUDE EXPLORATION

Items generated in preliminary exploratory discussion by small representative groups reflect concerns at both the building and district levels. Examples of concerns that may be discovered and used as the basis for further exploration are inherent in questions, such as:

1) Does the attendance at social functions such as dances reflect the socio-economic and ethnic make-up of the school?
2) What are potential approaches that could be made to parents to develop understanding of the desirability of diversity?
3) How can teachers be prevented from imposing their own ethnic predjudices on pupils to the exclusion of other ethnic cultures?
4) Are officers in school clubs elected on the basis of ability without discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin or socio-economic status? Are the criteria such that they exclude minority participation?
5) How responsive are the professionals in education, particularly the school board, to community pressures? For example, if teachers act in what they feel is the best interest of the students, are they given a chance to present their cases to the administration and school board before they are dismissed on the basis of an intolerant parent's anger?
6) Can the solution to the problem of prejudice be speeded up by conducting conferences with parents, like those which are held with teachers?
7) How can we set up challenging programs or activities to wipe out the feelings of the past? Feelings of superiority as well as of sublimation?
8) How can students be integrated without a counter reaction from minority students to strike back for all past injustices? What steps could be taken to give minority students the opportunity to address past injustices in an acceptable manner?
9) Why are learned or so-called educated people so prejudiced in spite of their educational experiences?

10) How can you talk freely when there appears to be a hostile or indifferent atmosphere?

11) Eating together is an essential activity. It provides another dimension to developing relationships. What logical reasons are there for not eating together in the school cafeteria? If there are none, then why not eat together?

12) The school is integrated and the community remains segregated; should this topic be broached in classroom discussion?

13) The kids are not the problem; the problem is the parents. How do you change the attitudes of the parents?

14) What can be done to encourage participation when parents will not allow their children to be active in extracurricular activities?

15) What do you do in a class which segregates itself, with very stong feelings on both sides?

Teachers' attitudes toward their colleagues also are extremely important in the day-to-day school routine. Attitudes, typically based on beliefs, experiences, and information, are held to be true. When opportunities for professional experiences among diverse ethnic groups were limited, teachers' attitudes toward professional colleagues of another ethnic origin generally were not based on reliable information, but on stereotyped identifications and overgeneralizations. Few teachers have attempted to examine their beliefs critically and logically. As a result, many reasonable teachers reject a rational analysis of their predjudiced attitudes. If the conflicting attitudes and the resulting behavioural patterns of diverse ethnic groups are not reconciled, attempts to refine working relationships will be stifled, and each group will find itself isolated from the other.

## A SUBSTANTIAL EFFORT FOR IMPROVEMENT

Educators need to strive to develop, through occasional, frank discussions of each other's problems, a rapport through which greater professional insight and personal understanding may result. Teachers should not assume that an integrated working relationship will come immediately. This is a part of the challenge presented here to the education community. Although some persons are slow to accept colleagues of a different racial identity, teacners who are committed to their profession put basic environmental and cultural differences in perspective.

It cannot be overemphasized that teachers should work with a member of another cultural and/or ethnic identity *on a sustained basis.* Statements such as, "I know you haven't had advantages, but..." are expressive of a patronizing attitude and imply a sense of superiority. Such rash or unmindful comments could negate the possibility of developing pleasant and deeper intergroup understandings and relationships.

The majority population in the past has effectively—openly or covertly—subjugated minorites. However, today we would hope that they are moving toward working alongside the twentieth-century minority person on an equity basis. If majority teachers expect deference from minority co-workers, they are in for disappointment; it will not be given. The attitudes of minorities are changing much more rapidly than those of the majority. From the inspiration of leaders in the intellectual emancipation of blacks such as W.E.B. DuBois, Carter Woodson, and Martin Luther King, Jr.,

blacks first changed their corporate image within their group but now are changing their image within the majority population. The change is persistent and evident. Teachers of all racial and cultural identities are bound together in the leading edge of human interaction and in situations demanding recognition by the changing patterns of the social order. The integrity of teaching in the future, therefore, will be determined in large measure by the success which all teachers have in establishing mutual professional and personal respect.

## TEACHER/PARENT RELATIONS

Further consideration for teacher training comes in the area of teacher-parent relations. This is an essential component for both Community and Multicultural Education preparation. In any school, the establishment of a satisfactory parent-teacher relationship is a necessary basis upon which to build parental confidence and respect. Where the teacher and parent are of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, the need for a harmonious working relationship takes on even greater importance. A teacher who has a multi-ethnic class faces many social, emotional, and psychological problems in attempting to create and develop a climate for effective teacher-parent comunication.

The teacher, educated to look beyond the child to the social and economic conditions from which the child comes, knows that no matter how adequate the curriculum, how many and varied the materials for instruction, how attractive the classroom, or how competent and understanding the administrators, these are mere instrumentation and structure for educating the child. The teacher also knows that these do not, and cannot, function effectively in an atmosphere devoid of open and realistic communication between teacher, parent, and community. Nor is it realistic to close one's eyes and rationalize that the child's social environment is not the province of the teacher, but the responsibility of society. The effective teacher is both a social and intellectual leader as a member of the society within which responsibility for change is assumed. In view of this, a professional commitment to teaching begins with teachers who accept their share of responsibility by striving to establish wholesome teacher-parent relationships through open, honest, frequent, and pleasant (if possible) communications with parents, to the end that the students will be the chief beneficiaries. The establishment of a satisfactory relationship with parents of another ethnic or cultural background is a necessary basis upon which to build parental confidence and trust.

Teachers want to know where to begin. A practical approach would be to consider the following general statements concerning parents of both majority and minority, culturally and educationally different pupils:

1. Children have strong motivation and loyalities to their families and their cultures. Here is where they belong, where they feel comfortable.
2. Parents of culturally *different* children (they are *not* disadvantaged or deficient) have been viewed as having little constructive help to offer for their children. While it is true that many parents, who themselves lack formal training, may find it difficult to aid in intellectual tasks, they still have a tremendous influence on the desires and ambitions of their children. Parents of meager educational backgrounds often have developed a greater appreciation for good schooling because they

know its relationship to responsible positions. These parents can motivate and encourage their children; they can instill in them an appreciation for good schooling.

3. If teachers are to be successful in getting the home and family to reinforce school, especially in changing habits and attitudes, they must find ways to improve and strengthen the family's concern for their children's education and relationship to the school.

These statements reflect the challenge that effective, meaningful communication must be achieved and that an understanding of the roles and problems of the home, school, and community must be developed. This can be done best by meeting parents *face-to-face.*

An expression of interest on the part of the teacher makes the parents feel that they, too, have a part in the child's education. Meetings may be planned for individual parents; however, at first, all parents might be invited to informal discussions built around such topics as activities in reading, field trips, or parental participation in their children's school experience. In this way parents are provided the opportunity to become acquainted with the teacher and other parents through common goals.

Long, drawn-out conferences, during which parents sit and listen to the teacher talk on and on about their child's strengths and weaknesses, what he/she needs and does not have, are not likely to strengthen a relationship. The parents should be encouraged to talk. The teacher could note their comments about their child's interests and experiences, ambitions for their child, and past school history. Since the home, as well as the school, is an educational agency, the opinions of parents should be respected; and of course, parents frequently offer valid criticisms and helpful suggestions. Parents and teachers together can guide the child better than each doing it alone.

The importance of the informal relationship cannot be overemphasized. If parents exhibit some hostility, it could very well be a reflection of their own disappointment and painful experiences in school. Basically, most parents consider the school as a source of hope for their children. When parents understand what the school is trying to do for their children and when they find they can genuinely rely on the teacher and the school to provide the skills necessary to cope with the new, more complex society, their interest, enthusiasm, and cooperation can be enlisted.

Some parents may not respond to a request to visit the school nor to a note requesting an appointment for a home visit. In such cases, the aid of a social worker, visiting nurse, community agent, or health official may be solicited. The teacher may receive useful information from them; frequently, they already have established rapport with parents.

Parents, on the whole, are anxious for their children to do well. Parents usually want to cooperate, and when cooperation is seemingly lacking, it is often because parents do not understand how they can help. Parents can be expected to give their cooperation only when they understand what the school is trying to do. Teachers and parents both benefit from effective home-school relationships; however, the children are the chief beneficiaries.

## STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHER PREPARATION

Preparation for teachers in these areas of relationships is critical to effectively implement Community and Multicultural Education. The need

for such training has surfaced with a national impetus. Evidence of the concern for Multicultural Education can be seen in the standard on Multicultural Education recently adopted by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE): (6.3 Long Range Planning)

> ....The institutional community will participate in conducting such studies and in projected plans for the long-range development of teacher education. In addition the long-range plan of the institution reflects a commitment to multicultural education STANDARD: The institution has plans for the long-range development of teacher education; these plans are part of a design for total institutional development.

To implement this standard in teacher preparation, universities must involve the larger community of which it is a part, realizing that the community has something of value to contribute. Tyson (1973) cites fourteen recommendations that, if implemented, will have some positive effect on the ability of universities and communities to create the conditions under which a culturally pluralistic society can evolve. Three of the fourteen recommendations are as follows:

> 1. The university should be a source of technical assistance that enables the community to develop the methodology and techniques to institutionalize its knowledge and capabilities of a marketable community.
>
> 2. The community must organize and structure itself so that its publics can make a positive contribution to the community's dialogue with educational institutions concerning goals and objectives.
>
> 3. Communities should negotiate the inclusion of their existence and activity as an essential part of the educational process.

This type of interaction with the community presently is not included in the reorganization of most universities. However, if they are to meet the NCATE standard, respond to the needs of society, become accountable, and effectively prepare teachers for a pluralistic society, then they must explore alternatives, such as these, to their present methods.

The results of the failure of universities to meet the needs of their community can be exemplified by a situation that arose in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The school district was deeply concerned about the ability of teachers to respond to multiethnic curriculum needs. After a study of the situation by teachers, parents, administrators, and community residents, the following statement was adopted by the Board of Education:

> Begininning in the 1972-73 school year, no student teacher shall be accepted by the Ann Arbor Schools unless he/she can demonstrate attitudes necessary to support and create the multi-ethnic curriculum. Each such student teacher must provide a document or transcript which reflects training in or evidence of substantive understanding of the multi-ethnic or minority experience (Baker, 1976).

The University of Michigan School of Education had no evidence of multiethnic/cultural education in the formal curriculum but did have

approximately one thousand students who had to meet this requirement in less than six months. A temporary arrangement for the current school year was negotiated with a workshop format as an acceptable interim approach. The School of Education then seriously planned and adopted specific multicultural objectives in their curriculum for preparing teachers.

The above example is used to provide further rationale for the critical necessity on the part of universities to attend seriously to both Multicultural Education and Community Education.

## CONCLUSION

A concluding question is examined. Where does one start, or where are the most effective resources for implementing Community and/or Multicultural Education? Historically, it appears that the federal government has been responsive to meeting the changing educational needs of society, perhaps because it is not subject to political pressures or the web of bureaucratic structures locally. If the responsibility is left to the federal government, it is not in keeping with the tenets of Community Education and local involvement in educational decision-making. How does one initiate convergence of two trends in education that have begun and depend on opposite forces? Community Education focuses on local problems, involvement, and political structures; Multicultural Education is embedded in "society-at-large" concerns and has been federally imposed.

Should the impetus for Multicultural and Community Education both be at the grass roots level? Can community members on the one hand influence local education when teachers on the other hand have not been trained or prepared in these areas? Can community members organize themselves enough to impact the stoic university to make it responsive to their needs? Should teachers take the initiative and demand training in these areas from the school district (in-service) and/or university (pre-service)? Or should they organize and attempt implementation with community support and involvement? Should they begin with curriculum revision and student oriented approaches?

Should the university be able to influence state certification procedures to effect requirements in these areas? Or should the state, being responsible for education, require universities to include these requirements? Or is a national association the logical one to effect both? Can universities work with local school districts and communities collaboratively to bring about the needed changes?

The answers to these questions are not clear at present. Any of the above mentioned groups may prove to be the most effective change agent. The near future should produce evidence of the most workable solution.

More questions are raised than can be answered when both concepts are considered. Is Multicultural Education dependent on Community Education, or vice versa? To what extent do the two areas need to interrelate to be successful? Is community involvement in education without regard for socio-economic/ethnic consideration satisfactory for either concept? How does one involve community in educational decision-making, ensuring representation from all strata to meet unique community needs? Are different involvement strategies and techniques necessary to involve minority rather than majority community members? If so, what are they?

The answers to these questions will be found through continued efforts by professionals as they conduct further research and experimentation, both of which are essential in education today.

Further examination may find that the two concepts, Community and Multicultural Education, at this point in time are not ready and/or willing to collaborate or cooperate. New programs or concepts usually begin with an isolationist approach until they "get their act together." This may be the state of the art for the present and the near future. The authors challenge professional educators to broaden their horizons and initiate progress

toward collaboration to the end that students and ultimately society itself will be the beneficiaries of their own effort—through Community and Multicultural Education processes.

It is the intent of the authors to present this challenge to educators to reduce isolationism, if that is the case, and to encourage coordinated efforts in Community and Multicultural Education toward their total integration into the entire educational processes. The opportunity to act rather than "talk" is rapidly passing. Although much has been written, planned, espoused, and even attempted, it still remains rhetoic until implementation can be documented, evaluated, validated, and disseminated, ultimately proving acceptance of diversity as a positive force in American society.

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